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Original Research Article

A Reflection on Manifestations of Power in the Representation of Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian Gardens on the Basis of Inscriptions and Friezes from the 12th Century to the 7th Century BC

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Abstract

By reviewing the role of cultural components and currents of thoughts in the formation of physical and functional specifications of the garden – in a geographical context –, we can acquire a more comprehensive image of the culture of the people who have constructed them. The role of the power component in the formation of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian civilization is manifested in the usage of friezes in gardens as a tool for presenting the royal power on the walls of their palaces. The relationship between power as a cause of formation of royal gardens (the “why” of it) and their presentation in the representation of the garden (the “how” of it) is indicative of the specific functional and physical traits of the garden in this era of our history. This view considers garden-centered friezes as imperialistic and political statement and promotes “power” as a cultural principle in the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian civilization. The present study aims to review the overall pattern of Assyrian and neo-Assyrian royal gardens with an emphasis on its political dimensions. Manifestation of such issue in the construction of the gardens of the Mesopotamia region, as a representation of the royal power in the representation of the gardens has yet to be studied in a comprehensive way in the form of an independent research with an emphasis on all its dimensions. The method of the present study is a qualitative historic analysis of content and the required information has been collected using a library method by referring to accessible primary information resources such as friezes, inscriptions and Assyrian literary texts and secondary information resources and available books. Representation of the royal garden as a natural-cultural phenomenon in the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian friezes has been done with the purpose of showing the civil and the military power of the king and implying his supernatural and extraterrestrial power. This is an indication of the focus on the power factor as a main field of garden’s representation which emphasizes three levels, namely representation of the act of creation in the construction of the garden, designed and artificial landscaping and presentation of non-local components and elements and their impact on the ideology and cultural belief regarding the god-like power of the king and his political acceptability and qualification. Such a form of representation illustrates an overall pattern of the royal garden beyond mere geometry and anatomy, in the form of common qualities such as its ritual-related and ceremonial aspect, artificiality and extraordinary innovation and its imitative and illustrative aspects.

Keywords: *Assyrian construction of garden, Mesopotamian civilization, garden-power, inscriptions, garden representation.*

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Introduction and statement of the issue

In addition to being a reflection of the values and intellectual foundations that make up a civilization, garden illustrates the political, cultural and economic components resulting from such values (Hunt, 2000). Tom Turner in his book, considers the design of the garden to be the consequence of responding to four main questions: what, why, where and how (Turner, 2005). The relationship between the purpose of those who have constructed the garden (the “why” question) and its physical features (the “how” question) is a significant relationship which creates the overall pattern of the garden in a certain cultural and geographical context in the form of a series of causal relations and presents the garden in the form of a comprehensive totality and as a conceptual-physical phenomenon.

Although the most significant feature of the garden in the Mesopotamia region is the fruitfulness of it and the existence of trees that act as a shelter and a protection against the heat of the sunshine; but through an exploratory perspective, the garden in this area has come to be known as a symbol of fertility of the land and a unique source of joy and happiness and is viewed in different ways, namely temple garden, palace garden, memorial garden, city garden, hunting garden, royal garden, etc. Assyrian and non-Assyrian royal gardens have had various uses such as entertainment purposes, a place for expressing love, celebrating the beauty of nature, holding ceremonies and rituals and displaying military achievements (Fig. 1). In the Mesopotamian civilization, garden has in fact had the role of an image that displays the material and spiritual power of the king (Amrhein, 2014,106). In the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian inscriptions of the first millennium BC, elements of existence have been categorized and used in order of significance and components have been represented in an abstract and subjective way based on their importance, regardless of their objective dimensions. One of the commonalities in the archaeological

findings is that the representation of garden, natural elements and landscapes (Rutten, 1941) have all been done in a symbolic way. The images illustrated in the inscriptions and literary texts, in a purposeful way, represent semantic, functional and physical features of the garden; which is a symbol of implicit concepts such as power and prestige of the king – as the main factor and agent of creation and origin – in the royal gardens of Mesopotamia. The present study has aimed to investigate the role of royal power of the king in the formation of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian royal gardens in Mesopotamia and to answer the following question: how have each of the dimensions and aspects of power been manifested in the representation of Assyrian and neo-Assyrian royal gardens and formed the overall pattern of the garden? Accordingly, in the following sections of the article, various manifestations of power in the royal gardens of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian civilization will be examined and analyzed and a final conclusion regarding the lesser known political role of the gardens in this region will be discussed.

Hypothesis

One of the main causes of the representation of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian royal garden in the inscriptions has been the presentation of various aspects of the royal power. Reflection of features such as the ritual-related and ceremonial functions, artificial and designed landscaping, collection and presentation of non-local plants have all helped the

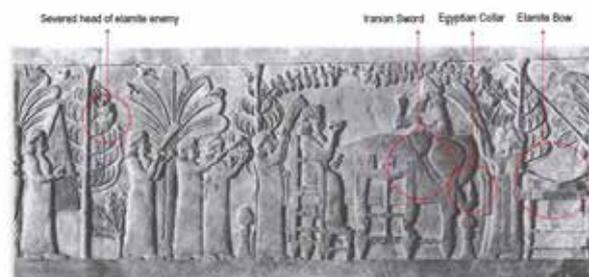


Fig.1. In a frieze known as the Garden Party, Ashurbanipal, the last Assyrian king, is seen feasting with his queen in his royal garden. Source: Novak, 2002.

implication of the metamorphic power of the king and the illustration of his civil and military power and have turned the garden and its representation into a cultural-political phenomenon.

Research method

The present study has aimed to explain the role of power in the formation of the pattern of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian royal gardens in the time span of the 12th century to the 7th century BC. In this research, the historic method and analysis of the content of the remaining texts and inscriptions – based on the spatial and environmental elements and words indicative of power – has been used. By collecting the available data and evaluating and investigating the accessible documents, the “why” and the “how” of the royal gardens have been reviewed and their political role has been explained. Given the history of the Mesopotamian civilizations and the fact that most of the pieces in the aforementioned region have been destroyed, the information resources have been limited to images such as friezes and written resources such as inscriptions and tablets made out of mud and literary texts and guidelines and orders such as Gilgamesh. The required information has been collected using a library method by referring to accessible primary information resources such as friezes, inscriptions and Assyrian literary texts and secondary information resources and available books. In the present study, collection, categorization and analysis of the historic findings have specified the causal relationship between the main physical and semantic specifications of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian royal gardens and the obtained results could be considered as a similar pattern for power-gardens in the historic and geographical context of the Mesopotamia.

Research background

In the Mesopotamian region, in addition to being a source of livelihood and survival and a rich source

of medicine (Thompson, 1949), the garden was a place for romantic meetings, a place for expressing love (Leick, 1994, 73-74), joy and happiness (Galter, 1989, 241), holding ceremonies and a place for gods (Wiseman, 1984, 41) and it often carried a political and national message and it was an indication of king’s power. To date, various studies have been conducted with the purpose of recognizing the causes of formation, the “how” and the “why” of gardens in the Mesopotamian area. Physical qualities of the garden have also been done with an emphasis on the symbolic and illustrative role of the garden and its design, especially in relation to the royal palace in the Sargonian period (Oppenheim, 1965). The first official garden of Mesopotamia was recognized in the time span of the years 2000 to 3000 BC as geometric and artificial gardens (Bowe, 2017). Amrhein has investigated the gardens of this region and categorized them in terms of their design and the degree of their “artificiality”. He considers royal gardens to be imitative, decorative, for show and a type of visual representation and the process of creating an artificial replica of nature (Amrhein, 2015). More specialized physical studies have also been done on the engineering of the irrigation of the Assyrian gardens with an emphasis on the livelihood aspect of water supply for agricultural lands and fruitful gardens (Bagg, 2000; Stevenson, 1992). A number of studies have focused on various types of gardens in this region and the relationship between this categorization and the worldview and mentality of the residents of the region (Assadpoor, 2018). Dalley has specifically referred to symbolism and exploitation of artificial tools in creating a romantic and emotion-oriented landscape and creating a garden that is a symbol of heaven (garden of Eden) in the construction of the gardens of this area (Dalley, 1993).

Stronach was the first researcher who introduced the garden as a political statement (1990). In the articles done by Hunt (2015) and Donald (2016), the effect

of the political power in the formation of garden has been discussed with an ontological approach and as the cause of formation and the factor affecting it. Hunt believes that the political origin of the formation of the garden is a systemic interaction between the central government and the dominated territory in the form of strategic attempts and the formation of the royal neo-Assyrian manifestation (Hunt, 2015). Donald believes that the garden is a manifestation of power and a means for transmitting ideological and political concepts with the purpose of reinforcing the ideological and religious position of the king (Patrick, 2016). Therefore, the royal garden came to be known as the “world garden” or the “small world” of the Assyrian empire (Novak, 2002). Examining the nature and the cause of existence of the garden through its political role has been limited to collecting and displaying non-local plants and animals in the garden with the purpose of validating the government and adding to its credit and reputation and satisfying the royal pride of the king (Polinger Foster, 1999). The present study has aimed to examine the nature and cause of existence (the “how” and the “what”) of the garden with an emphasis on its political role as the origin of its formation; which has yet to be done in the form of an independent research and by taking all of its dimensions into consideration. Examining and summarizing various manifestations of political power in the garden have helped expanding the nature of gardens of this area as well as explaining the pattern of royal gardens as a physical-semantic totality and facilitates viewing the garden as a cultural phenomenon and recognizing it as part of the identity of the Mesopotamian civilization.

Importance of garden in the formation of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian civilization

Relationship with nature has always captured attention as a simultaneous survival and destruction factor in the formation and existence of old civilizations. Since the third millennium BC, by using agricultural

irrigation in the extremely arid central and southern areas of Mesopotamia, the garden has had various roles in this area. In addition to having a variety of facilities, such as water, productivity and fruitfulness, good shading and desirable air, the garden has been known as a symbol of joy. The garden has always been present in the day-to-day lives of the residents of this region and their religious beliefs; so much so that gardening was officially recognized as a profession in the year 3000 BC in a text titled “standard list of professions” (Pollock, 1999). On the other hand, the non-material importance of garden in this civilization is visible through selecting some trees for the gods¹, holding ceremonies in the garden, building tombs in the garden, etc. the garden has also been important because of its role in representing the world and the powers of the king and therefore has been considered as one of the requirements for establishing and maintaining a powerful government. The role of the garden in transmitting the notion of power in this civilization is so significant that kings such as Ashur Banipal the second, when occupying a region and defeating the enemy, have destroyed the gardens and trees of the defeated government before doing anything else (Assenat, 2018) (Fig. 2). Since the reign of Tiglet Pacer, when kings were establishing new cities, they would simultaneously establish new gardens².

Creation of the garden, a manifestation of the spiritual power of the king

The king’s presence in the gardens illustrated in friezes is an indication of a type of ideological royal paradigm (Wyatt, 2014, 1-35) as well as the status of the king as the gardener and caretaker of the plants which is a symbol of his responsibility towards protecting his followers and subjects (Widengren, 1951). The king has been the mediator in the creation of gardens and construction of the irrigation systems by him has been considered as a ritual or a ceremonial action to create a cosmic system in imitation of gods

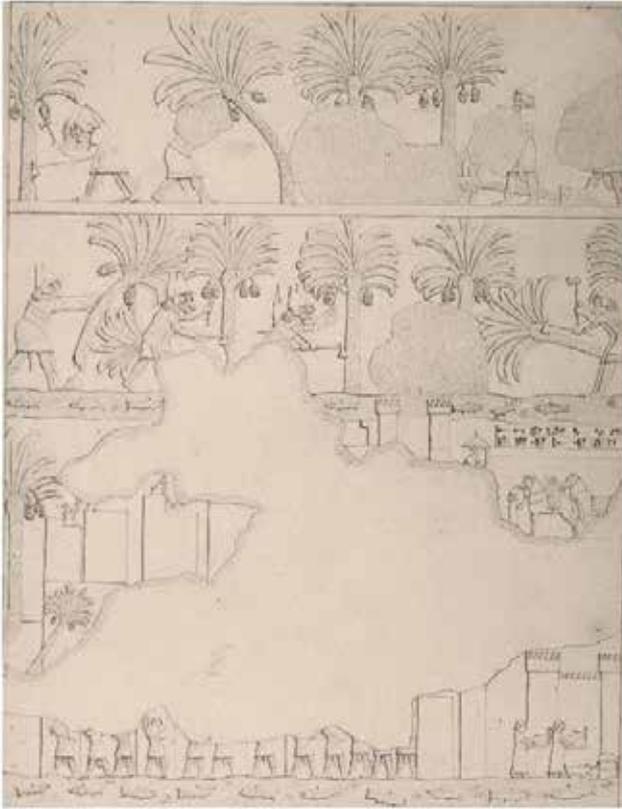


Fig. 2. destruction of palm trees and the gardens of the cities occupied by Assyrian soldiers, which symbolically refers to the destruction of the previous sovereignty. Source: Trustees of Kouyunjik the British Museum.

in the creation of the worlds (Rivaroli, 2004, 201-204; Mieroop, 2007, 178) (Fig. 3). In this approach, the garden is considered as a living trophy of the king's domination of the turbulent environment and the world (Van Leeuwen, 2007,67-90; Patrick, 2016,71). In general, in this civilization, construction of cities, urban landscapes and gardens was an imitation of the act of creation and a means to create the order and control in the world, metaphorically. The kings have put emphasis on the issue that the previous location of their garden had been a barren desert and it has been the spiritual role of the king that has made the productivity and fruitfulness of his surrounding environment possible and it all referred to the national character of the king and his majestic and cosmic role in cultivating the whole earth in the form of the garden. Thus, depiction of the garden in friezes has been nothing but the symbolic indoctrination of

“creation” by the king and his equality with the gods and the narrative of his god-like power which was transmitted to the masses through this method.

• Holding ceremonial rituals

Visual representations and discourses was a symphony of the simultaneous existence of king and god, natural substrate and factors of the garden, incidents and rituals which were followed by a kind of “political-religious indoctrination” (Stronach & Lumsden, 1992, 228) with a symbolic expression. Implication of extraordinary dimensions of the royal power was done through the production of images and representations with the topic of holding ceremonies in the royal gardens and explaining and recording them in the form of friezes, inscriptions, texts, poems, etc. Representation of the royal garden with an emphasis on the effectiveness and joyfulness was a proof of the spiritual power of the ruler and the attention paid to symbolism and the presence of ceremonial atmospheres and spaces such as alters in the garden heightened this issue more and more. One of the main uses of the garden in the Assyrian civilization was “a holy place for the king's participation in the rituals” (Parpola, 1987, 17-21) and “cultural, economic, governmental, and religious ceremonies such as the New Year celebration³⁷” (Novak, 2002; Wiseman, 1984, 41-42) which paved the way for proving the king's political legitimacy. There was a special example of the royal gardens with a ceremonial function in the form of temple gardens,

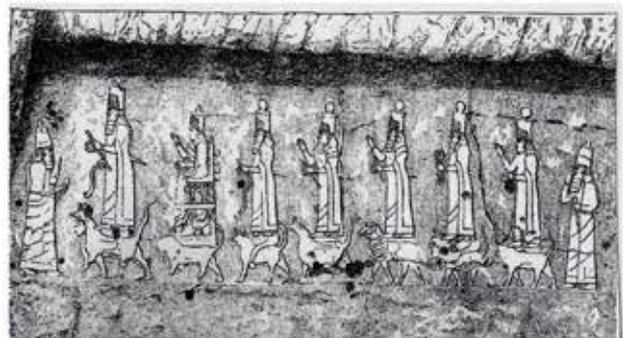


Fig. 3. a frieze of the Assyrian king Sennacherib in the company of gods in the construction site of irrigation facilities. Source: Dalley, 2013, 93.

a garden for royal pleasure and joy and a hunting garden in this civilization and the rituals held in these gardens were indications of the power and domination of the king in a holy place to guarantee safety, to overcome natural disasters and foreign threats and attacks (Figs. 4 & 5).

Artificialization of nature, manifestation of the operational power of the ruler

Assyrian kings, in addition to being powerful rulers and fighters, were considered to be royal architects with unique incentives and imaginations. They believed they were obligated to create a capital, royal palace and a garden which would be worthy of their unique reign⁴. Therefore, the palace-garden complex was considered to be more than institutional royal residents and recreations for spreading and preserving the Assyrian ideology. A change in the path of the rivers and creation of arid land, drainage facilities and massive water structures to supply water to the cities and royal gardens are indications of the advanced engineering knowledge of this region's residents (Tamburrino, 2010; Besnier, 2000). One example for such efforts is the effort made by king Sennacherib to change the path of the Khosr river with the purpose of supplying water to the gardens of his new capital and construction of enormous aqueducts and water canals. Remains of such facilities played an important role in identifying the status of urban gardens in Nineveh (Fig. 6).

• Designed landscaping

A main approach in Assyrian and neo-Assyrian method of garden construction was to turn the obvious natural chaos to man-made order (Bowe, 2017). Royal gardens were beyond physical organization of the surrounding environment and using plants in a decorative manner and they were often designed hills full of trees, and a royal building, an altar or a palace, on top of it. Representation of the artificial structure of the garden in the friezes were different from other natural areas in the region. The purpose of this, in addition to explaining the similarity between friezes and foreign landscapes in



Ordinary people watching the ritual from top of the hill Ashurbanipal hunting a lion



Figs. 4 & 5. Gardens were a substrate to show the king's power in the form of ceremonial rituals such as hunting a lion illustrated in the friezes of the walls of king Ashur Banipal the second. Source: Trustees of the British Museum.

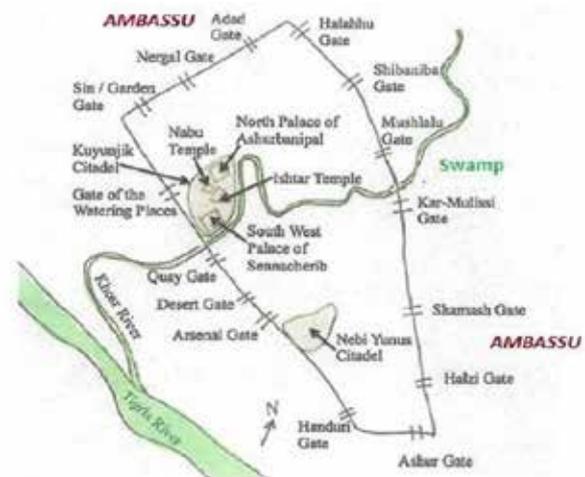


Fig. 6. Map of the change of path of Khosr river done by Sennacherib to provide the required water infrastructure to establish gardens in the city of Nineveh. Source: atlas of the ancient Near east oxford 1990, 186 modified by D. Patrick Jan. 27, 2016.

inscriptions was to show that king was extraordinary as far as engineering and technical achievements, as well as creativity, were concerned.

During the reign of Sargon (705-722), the new idea of the garden called KIRIMAHHU was formed which

included changes in the landscape through artificial hills and lakes with a pergola mansion above it. Sargon the second, from 706 to 713 BC, was building a new capital. In an inscription, he refers to building a garden like “Mount Amanos⁵” which is “organized with its sides” and there are all kinds of “trees” from “the land of Hittites” and “plants from any mountain” (Patrick, 2016; Stronach, 1990). Combining the information obtained from inscriptions and friezes that represent the gardens shows how the king uses his god-like and God-given power with an emphasis on the details of design such as non-local plants and builds a garden that were symbolically constructed in a hill-like topography and represents a foreign landscape – mount Amanos – (Fig. 7).

• Advanced aqueous systems

Getting help from professional gardeners and modern irrigation systems were common for the survival of rare and non-local plants among Mesopotamian kings. Kings used designed irrigation systems to preserve their designed gardens⁶. Sennechreib inscriptions (681-704 BC) show that this prominent ruler, at the time of developing and creating his own capital Nineveh, has

followed his father’s method in organizing “an enormous garden similar to mount Amanos⁷”. This garden is an imitative landscape with a mountain full of trees and miniature water jugs. Sennechreib used progressive and advanced techniques in building small canals to irrigate the hill of his garden. In Stronach’s opinion (1990), this garden received its required water from a watercourse with a bedrock instead of a simple canal or a river. In Dalley’s view, it is possible that the water hill must have been used for irrigating the hill or a structure to reinforce it (Dalley, 1993). What is obvious is that creation of the artificial hill-like structure and an advanced irrigation system was aimed to create symbolic landscapes and to show the rulers’ engineering skills and power (Fig. 8).

Dealing with details; manifestation of the ruler’s military power

The necessity of the interregional cultural interaction between the central government and the vast dominated territory and the annexed areas gave the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian governments a kind of dual pluralist-imperialist identity. On the one hand, this issue along with the “unity of diversity” (Hunt, 2015, 24-25)

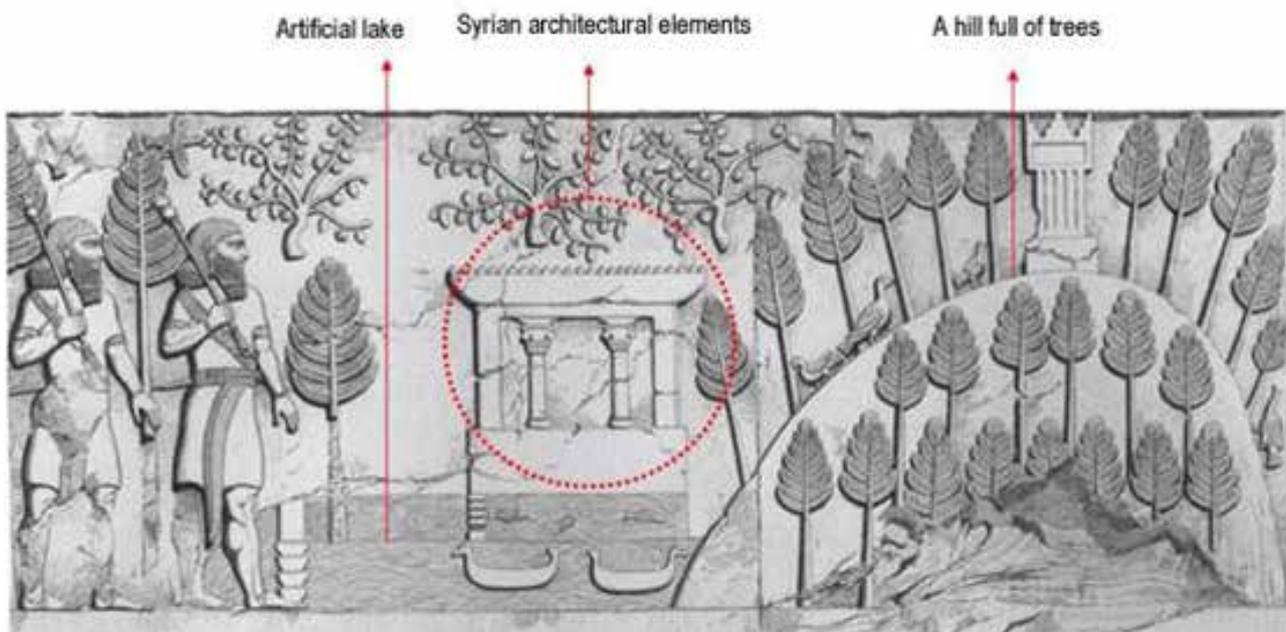


Fig. 7. Royal garden of Sargon the second in Khers Abad with a landscape designed in imitation of Mount Amanos in the form of tree-planted hills, artificial lake with an imitative architecture of Syrian region. Source: Stronach, 1990.

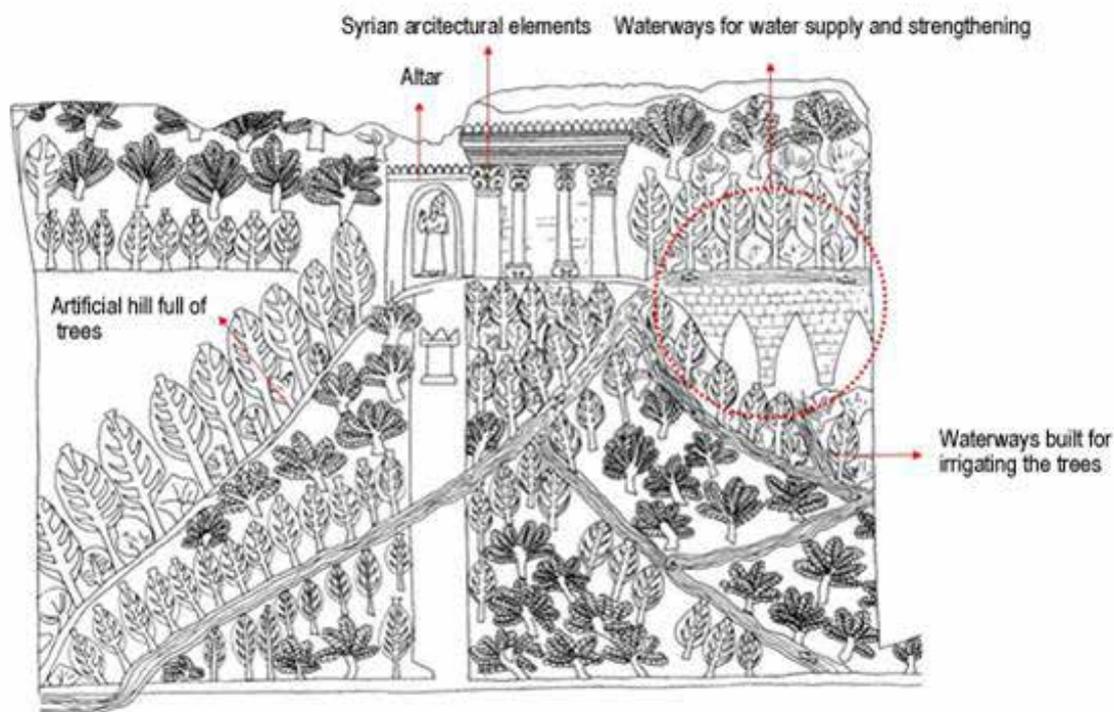


Fig. 8. Manifestation of the engineering and operational power of the ruler in creating a waterway to irrigate or reinforce the water structure of king Sennachreib's garden. The garden is seen as an artificial hill-like garden in the picture. Source: Dalley, 1993.

have made the unification of the Assyrian empire and the numerous lands dominated by them so that there would be a unity between the lands with the central government at the center regardless of all the difference. On the other hand, it was one of the main tools to show power and credibility of the Assyrian god. Collection and consumption of special goods in the royal gardens and the royal palace, “imperialistic collection” of plant and animal species⁸ (Pratt, 2008; Crosby, 2004; Hunt, 2015, 35) and imitation of the physical structure and the architectural details of foreign scenes (Winter, 1993) was a way for the Assyrian empire to display unity and stability of power which gave the royal gardens of this era of history unique physical features.

•Displaying non-local plants

Growing plants in the Mesopotamian region moved beyond productivity and creation of shelter against the sun and it went further than the traditional “profitable” garden in the era of Sargon the second and had “showing” purposes (Oppenheim, 1965, 331-333).

Different types of plants were collected from all over the lands dominated by the government and were displayed in the public and royal gardens of the central government (Bagg, 2000; Thompson, 2005) (Fig. 9). As it can be seen in a song from the 6th century BC, there are some references to strange non-local plants “which had surprised all of the city” (Foster, 2001). At times these plants, by moving from one culture to another, due to their newness and attractiveness, would enter the semantic importance and sanctity into the Assyrian culture as well and a kind of cultural exchange would happen. The most intelligent collector among these rulers was Tiglet Pacer (approx. 1000 BC). In the royal inscription, it has been mentioned that:

“I, with the help of my god Ashur, brought ... the cedar tree, canis oak and ... from other lands under my control. These are trees that did not exist before me in the cities of my ancestors and it was I who planted them” (Dalley, 1993).

Ashur-Nasir-Pal the second (883-859 BC), founder of

the new Assyrian empire, was one of the first kings to pay special attention to the garden as a powerful means for royal propaganda. One of the obvious advantages of having a vast realm was that he could collect foreign trees and plant seeds and he would plant them in his new garden in Nimrud later. As a result, the naturalistic culture of this civilization were the trophies the kings brought from winning and conquering other countries and their reflection in the images of the garden proves that the kings would collect plants to show their achievements and display power.

• Imitative methods of construction

Demonstrating the extent and vastness of the realm of the rulers in the foreign lands was not limited to only the usage of non-local plants, but there were also the way details of foreign architecture were used. Construction techniques and decoration methods of the dominated countries were also in building royal palaces in the form of a cultural exchange. For instance, in building king Sargon's palace, Syrian architecture has been imitated in a detailed way such as shape of the columns to put emphasis on the vast extent of penetration of the Assyrians on the western front of the Euphrates (Stronach, 1990) (see Fig. 9).

Discussion

By focusing on the remaining evidence of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian gardens, it can be understood that in this era of history, the need to explain, continue and propagate the royal power, led the empire to use images of the royal gardens as a propaganda tool. This narrative was at times displayed in the form of illustration of the notions resulting from such thinking; in which the garden was a symbol of Eden and the ruler had god-like powers. On the other hand, it was sometimes manifested in the form of objective presentations such as modeling the lands dominated by the ruler. In this respect, transmission of the concept of power in the aforementioned representations has been done in two, direct and indirect, ways;

- Indirect manifestation of power was concentrated on



Fig. 9. Rare details about the usage of various and non-local plants in a frieze displaying a hunting garden on the walls of Ashur Banipal's palace. Source: Dalley, 1993, 93.

displaying and reinforcing the spiritual status of the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian kings. This dimension is mostly implicit and narration-like, rather than objective documentations of power. It includes illustration of the king in the position of power and his domination over the turbulent outside world and his giving life to the land he acquired. It has been often recorded as hunting feasts, official rituals and ceremonies in texts and inscriptions (see Figs. 4 & 5). Such a presentation of spiritual power gives the garden a ceremonial character and function and turns it into a spiritual space to display the transcendental dimension of the king's power.

- Direct manifestation of power is seen in the objective evidence of the royal power and shows an emphasis on the exploitation of knowledge and advanced construction and engineering techniques in various scales of the ruler's civil and operational power; such as symbol and designed landscaping with the purpose of creating foreign landscapes or epic hills full of trees (see Figs. 7 and 8) and attempts on a much bigger scale such as changing the path of rivers, drainage of cities, establishing advanced and modern irrigation systems with the purpose of supplying the necessary infrastructures to establish a garden (see Figs. 3 & 6). Such actions have turned Assyrian gardens to artificial products that are extraordinary and unique and shows how advanced the Assyrian kings were as the creators of the garden as far as engineering and civil skills are concerned.

- Another tangible and objective effects of power in the

royal gardens was the collection and maintenance of non-local animals and plants (see Fig. 9) and application of architectural principles of other dominated regions. These displayed the ruler as the conqueror of a vast realm with an emphasis on his military power and at the same time, displayed him as a pluralistic character devoted to his government. This gave the garden a demonstrative and theatrical dimension, as an imitative man-made and cultural phenomenon which is indicative of a certain part of the history and culture of the vast Assyrian empire. It also is an indication of the military power of the king and his domination over the defeated countries (Fig. 10).

Conclusion

Representation of royal gardens in the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian friezes was a political and propaganda tool to spread the king’s royal ideology. The image of the royal garden was presented with the purpose of displaying the king’s glory and power to the public and his subjects as well as other civilizations, who were not able to see the garden for themselves due to safety reasons unless in certain cases. In addition, representation of the garden

as an artificialized and cultural phenomenon acted as a media that showed various dimensions of the ruler’s power. At its first level, to imply the extraordinary and god-like power of the king, the garden was built as an imitation of the act of creation itself and this fact would be explained to the public on the base of the garden’s ceremonial functions. The reason for the implication of the god-like power of the king in the representations of the gardens could be the mutual needs of the kings and the masses to survive and the kings would put lots of emphasis on the material and spiritual support they would provide the public with to make them think they need the government which would in turn lead to the stability and survival of the government. At a smaller scale, such as using non-local animals and plants and foreign architecture, the military power of the Assyrian kings and their wide range of realm have been manifested and by affecting the physical features of the garden, these attempts played a complementary role in proving and consolidating their power. Although the features resulting from the impact of the power component on how the garden has been presented in the remaining works are not representative of the

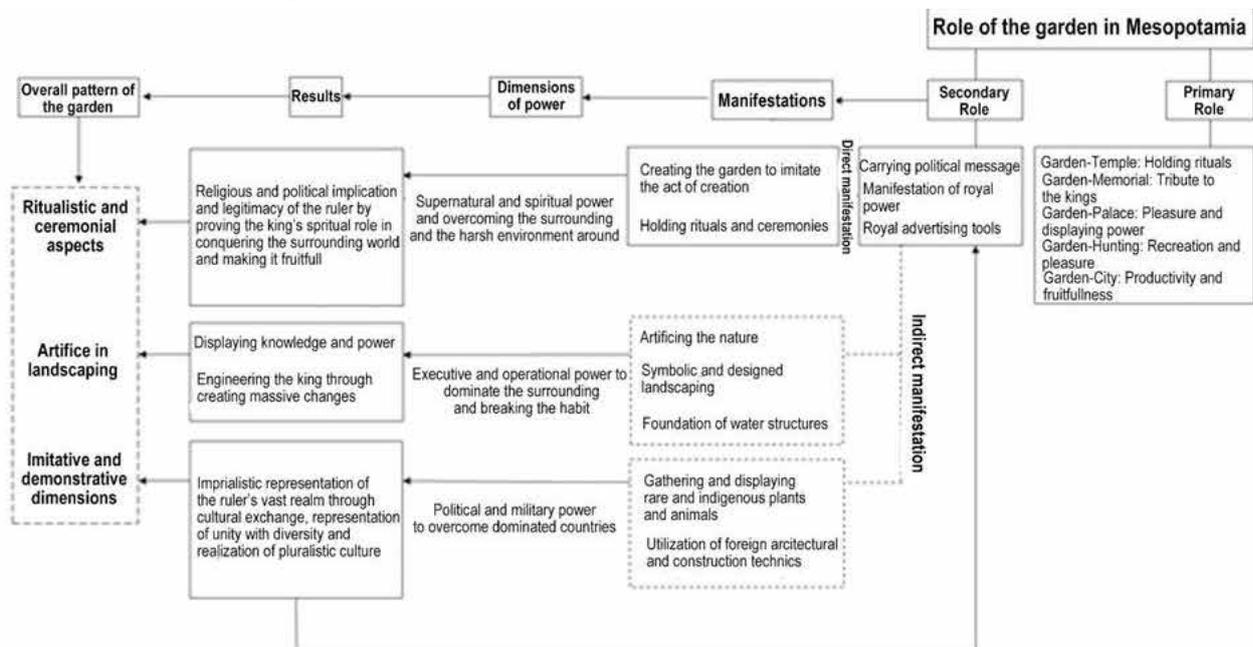


Fig. 10. conclusion of findings regarding different manifestations of power in the Assyrian and neo-Assyrian gardens and their impact on the overall pattern of the garden. Source: authors.

exact physical and geometric structure of the garden in its true form; however, it is possible to estimate common qualities such as the ritual and ceremonial aspect, artificiality of landscaping and imitative and demonstrative dimensions of the overall pattern of the garden. The mentioned qualities in a series of causal relations introduces the garden as a multidimensional phenomenon with a cultural origin and introduces power as the main factor for its formation in the starting point and its qualitative and physical features as it progressed.

Endnote

1. The Assyrian and Babylonian gods had their own special gardens (especially Enlil, Anu, Adad, Naboo and Nana) and based on the inscriptions, certain types of trees to certain gods (Wiseman, 1984).
2. For instance, when Sargon the second (704-722 BC) built a totally new city named Dur Shrukin in the northeast of Nineveh, brought good and reinforced soils from local lands with himself to the new city to create fresh gardens where he would hunt lions and falcons with his family (Dalley, 1993).
3. The new year celebration was a public celebration with the purpose of displaying the unity between the king's power and Ashur the god held at the royal garden where domination of chaos by the king would be celebrated through representation of the act of creation (Amrhein, 2014, 101).
4. Assyrians designed cities in an artificial and in the form of certain actions which included changing the path of rivers to select the location of some buildings and creating a controlled landscape and a city that would show the symbolic domination of Assyrian hegemony over the turbulent outside world (Patrick, 2016).
5. Amanos, who has played an important role in the descriptions of other Mesopotamian gardens presented in the inscriptions that exist in the northeast of the Mediterranean coast and extends to Cilicia.
6. In the Mesopotamian region, the water supply techniques were applied in the form of constructing a system of canals to transfer the water of the rivers and mountains to agricultural lands and gardens. Assyrians could be considered as the first hydraulic engineers in history (Bagg, 2000).
7. They also used an enormous water system to transfer water from mountains and high hills to the city to use the water to irrigate the fruit gardens of their capital, Nimrud; which was adjacent to Tigris river in the north of Iraq. Here is what he wrote about his garden:
8. "I have planted in my garden seed that I had found in my attacks on other countries; trees such as pine, cypress and juniper, almond, crystal wood, olive, oak, turmeric, walnut, pomegranate, pear, fig, coffee and ... (Stronach, 1990).
9. Representation of power and vastness of the ruler's realm in landscaping has not been limited to using non-local plants in the Mesopotamian civilization. In addition to rare plants, this civilization and the Egyptian civilization used to use rare animals, fish and birds that belonged to distant lands to show their gardening skills and power (Foster, 1999, 64).

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